MONTEREY NEWS

June 2010
VOLUME XL · Number 6

The Town

by Sue Protheroe

The Monterey School

After the annual town meeting approved amending the existing school district agreement to allow any school in the district to be closed by a vote of four of the five district towns (rather than all five as before), the Select Board received a letter from the Southern Berkshire Regional School District School Committee requesting that Monterey hold a special town meeting to consider closing the Monterey School, due to low enrollment, an inadequate facility, and the retirement of longtime teacher Susan Andersen.

Mari Enoch

Crane installing the salt shed frame at the town garage (behind the Gould Farm silo)

The topic is one of concern to the town and is being much discussed at Select Board meetings. Stephen Enoch pointed out that under the present agreement, a school has to be provided if there are enrollees. Michael Storch pointed out, as he had at town meeting, that when the town gets widespread broadband Internet service there will be more full-time residents and young people with children, and that it would be shortsighted to close the school.

Because Egremont has postponed voting on the new school agreement until October, and approval has to be unanimous by all five district towns (Monterey, Alford, New Marlborough, Sheffield, Egremont), Select Board member Jon Sylbert said there is no reason to have a special town meeting now, that there was plenty of time, and the issue could be dealt with at the next annual town meeting next May. The Board drafted a letter to the school committee stating that they didn't feel it was necessary to call a special town meeting at this time. The Board supports trying to keep the school open because of its importance to the town and the desirability of having local schools.

The Board feels that the Monterey School's situation will have an impact on the future of downtown Monterey. Because of this, a community conversation about the future of the Village of Monterey is being planned for the month of July. Discussions will include the General Store, the church, the school, the Wilson McLaughlin House, the expansion of Greene Park, and any other future venues. All those concerned with maintaining downtown Monterey as a vibrant town center should watch for the date in July and plan to attend and provide

their input. This issue is as important to second-home owners as it is to full-time residents.

Library Matters

The Select Board discussed the Historical Society's use of space at the Monterey Library and reviewed the original agreement between the Library Trustees and the Historical Society. The library needs the space for its growing activities. The Board acknowledged that the building is a town building and that the Library Trustees are responsible for it. Alternate areas for the Historical Society were considered. The Board feels that the Historical Society needs to remove the contents from the General Knox room, clean the mold off the items, create an inventory, assess their storage needs, and approach the town for assistance. Jon Sylbert and Scott Jenssen of the Select Board attended the May 3rd meeting of the Library Trustees with the Historical Society and made this position clear.

Police Blotter

- False alarms on Tyringham Road, Woodland Drive, Beartown Mt. Road, Hupi Road, and Main Road. Most of these calls are because the alarm systems have not been maintained properly or are set at too sensitive a level, setting an alarm off even if a mouse runs across the floor. Scott Jenssen asked if the majority of the alarms were from the same alarm company. Police Chief Gareth Backhaus will ask Melissa Noe to check the records and see if there is a pattern.
- Assisted Fire Department with a controlled burn on Main Road.
- Abandoned 911 call on Main Road; dialing error.
- Tree across Main Road, knocked out power.
- Domestic disturbance, Pixley Road.
- Report of keys lost.
- Assisted Fire Department with an alarm on Carrington Battelle.
- Loose boat on Lake Garfield identified and recovered.
- Report of outside noises at 1:20 a.m. on Mt. Hunger Road. Bear?
- Assisted Great Barrington Police in two-car head-on accident that shut down traffic in the area of Plaza Package.
- A $600 cell phone was turned in; after Police Department contacted the phone company, the owner of the phone was contacted and retrieved it.
- Loose cow, Blue Hill Road.

Chief Backhaus reported that Officer Johnson is doing a great job and introduced the Select Board to Michael Alden, who will be appointed on a part-time basis to direct traffic and to ride with the Monterey Police until June 30. The plan is for him to be directing traffic on Saturdays and Sundays through the summer in the General Store area. This brings the Police Department staff to two full-time officers and three part-time officers.

Highway and Byways

Construction of the salt shed has begun after a building permit was approved and the contract was approved by Town Counsel.

All the dead maples along Tyringham Road will need to be removed. Director of Operations Maynard Forbes said it is probably too big a job for the Tree Warden.

Michael Storch wanted to know if there were any more funds in the CET fund for solar lights on the highway garage. Forbes said no, that most of the money was used by the Park Commission a few years ago to buy the Big Belly trash compactors at Greene Park and at the town beach.

In 1993, the Town bought a diesel generator for the fire station that was never used. It was taken to the shop at the town garage, where it will be used.

The paving of Route 23 is on hold because the state has some concerns about portions of the project. Forbes went to a Department of Transportation meeting on May 27 to try to determine why we didn't get the STRAP grant for the repaving and to discover what information the

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state is looking for. Select Board member Wayne Burkhart attended a meeting of the Transportation Advisory Committee of the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission to ask if the repaving of Route 23 could be considered a preservation project as opposed to improvement project, and thus fall under the purview of BRPC. He was told that it could and that BRPC is big on transportation planning. Cell towers also fall within their purview.

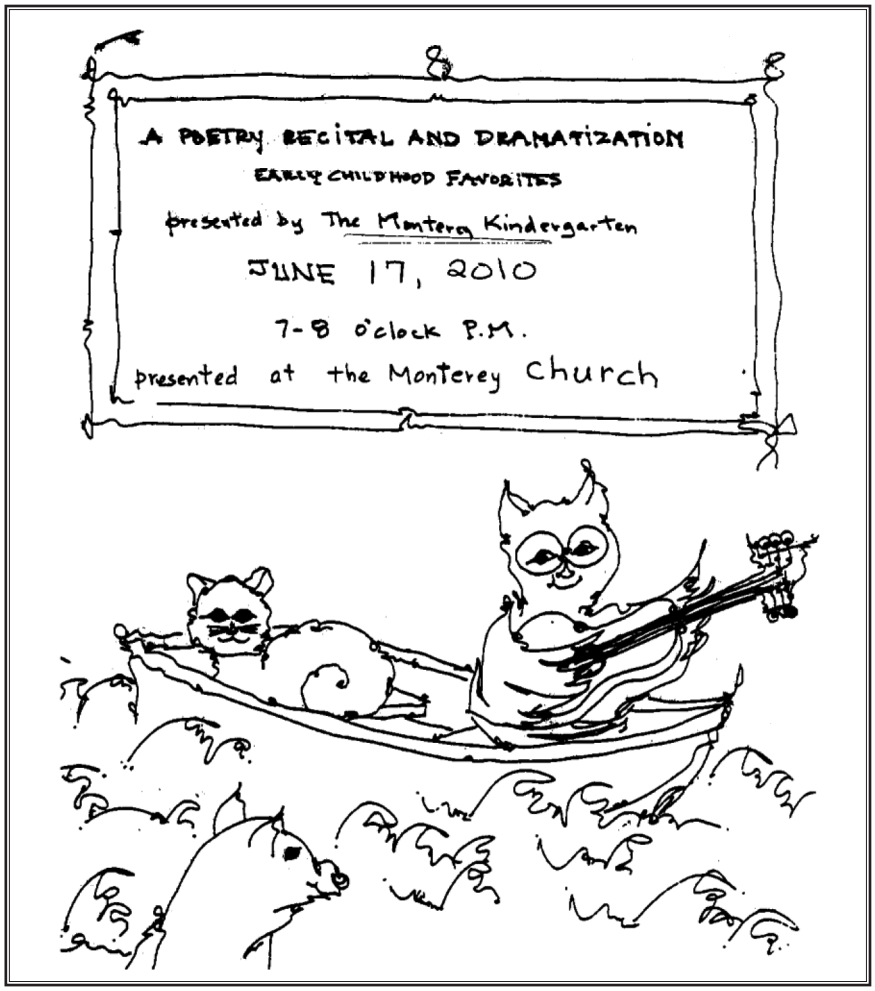
Fences have been fixed at the town beach and on Beartown Mountain Road.

The Connecticut Stage Race, two days of competitive cycling, will pass through Monterey on June 6. While Route 23 will not be closed, police will assist in making sure that the bicyclists can pass safely. The bicyclers have obtained permits from each town, at the request of Mass. Highway.

The Berkshire Trail Riders passed through town on May 23. This was a 200-mile tour by dirt bikes and motorcycles of dirt roads, back roads, and unmaintained roads of the Berkshires, designed as a fundraiser for the EMS and Rescue Squads of Sandisfield, Otis, and Tolland.

Driveway & Dog Park

The proposed driveway and dog park on the former Wilson Mclaughlin property, both approved at the May 1 town meeting are still being much discussed. Michael Storch questioned the location of the driveway entrance in Joe Baker's presentation at the town meeting. Jon Sylbert noted that the article passed approved the expenditure of $25,000 for the driveway but not the location. Later in the month, the Select Board made a site visit to the Wilson Mclaughlin house to review the proposed location and consider other possible locations for a driveway and parking lot. The Board decided to hold further meetings with the Wilson McLaughlin Committee in order to make this decision. Maynard Forbes will provide the Board with estimates for putting the driveway in various locations.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A bylaw change is necessary in order to install the proposed dog park, for which $10,500 was approved at town meeting. The present bylaw says that dogs are not allowed in town parks or at the beach. Dennis Downing asked the Select Board to determine whether or not the Wilson McLaughlin property is a town park. Downing did not feel it should be designated a park and thus would not require a bylaw change in order for the dog

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park to be installed there. Town Counsel advised the Board, "What we call it is not important, it's what occurs on the property that matters. In this respect, the standard description of an area for dogs to 'do their thing' is a 'dog park,' so it's somewhat incongruous to characterize it as something else."

A special permit for the Wilson McLaughlin house is also necessary. The Board agreed that funds will not be released to construct a fence for the dog park until a plan has been developed for who will be responsible for the maintenance and upkeep.

Swap Shack

There have been complaints that the Swap Shack at the Transfer Station is in poor condition. The Board noted that the Swap Shack is not officially the responsibility of the Transfer Station attendant. It was hoped that a committee of volunteers could be formed to manage the Swap Shack, or at least to remove some of the items. At a later meeting, Maynard Forbes confirmed that the Swap Shack is indeed a mess; moreover, the present attendant has not been effective in managing the Transfer Station, and an alternative should be sought.

Anyone interested in being involved in a committee to manage the Swap Shack should contact Melissa Noe at Town Hall. Senior citizens can do volunteer work of this nature and be credited an hourly wage toward their real estate taxes.

Lake Matters

In order to use Monterey's lakes, especially Lake Buel, boaters have to fill out and display on the car's dashboard the questionnaire available at the boat ramp about boat cleaning and exposure to zebra mussels. If it is not displayed, the police will issue a warning, and if the offense is repeated, there are large potential fines. A new form must be filled out and displayed with each visit to the launch. The questionnaire is to verify that the boat has not been in contaminated water, or has been cleaned properly.

Boats must be registered, have a boating safety certificate, a life jacket for each person on board, a flotation aid, a fire extinguisher in good condition, flares in good condition, a working horn or whistle, an anchor and anchor line, a compass, and charts for the area, a boat hook, mooring lines and fenders, paddles or oars, tool kit with spare parts, a flashlight, a bailing device, a VHF radio, first aid kid, weather radio, and necessary personal items. The police department will be checking for compliance when they inspect cars for the above questionnaires.

Preparing for Disasters

Brian Domina of Berkshire Regional Planning came to a Select Board meeting to discuss the town's ongoing plans for natural hazard mitigation. They discussed potential hazards in Monterey such as flooding, invasive species (including zebra mussels), and ice storms. Two grant programs exist, from FEMA and MEMA, for which the town needs an approved natural hazard mitigation program. The grants would fund improvements to help with future disasters; the disaster mitigation program kicks in after there is a federally declared disaster. The focus of hazard mitigation in Monterey will be on flooding. Potential flood areas were identified: Lake Buel, the dam behind the general store, Heron Pond, Brewer Pond dam, an old sawmill dam beyond Brewer Dam, River Road, Beartown Mountain Road (influenced by beaver dams), the beaver pond on Sandisfield Road, the wooden bridge on New Marlborough Road (Rawson Brook), Wellman Road.

Miscellaneous

The town beach lifeguards will be on duty starting the weekend of June 12, and then full time from the weekend of June 19 through Labor Day.

Jon Sylbert was named Chair of the Board of Selectmen.

Raymond Tryon informed the Board that the Constable position was left off the town election ballot, so he has not been voted in. Town Counsel was contacted for advice, and the Board approved Mr. Tryon for another three-year term.

Town Clerk Linda Thorpe suggested that the annual town election be held the Tuesday following the annual town meeting because there were complaints that the noise from the elections made it difficult to hear at the meeting.

The Select Board joined the Southern Berkshire Chamber of Commerce.

R. Halberstader was appointed to serve on the Cultural Council.

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Annual Town Meeting

The annual town meeting took place at the Monterey Firehouse at 9:30 a.m. on May 1. The town budget of over three million dollars and all of the twenty-two special articles on the warrant were approved by the citizens in attendance. Voters approved two of the bigger ticket items, Article 12 appropriating $92,000 for a new snowplow truck and Article 14 appropriating $71,000 for the loan and interest on the construction of the salt shed at the town garage.

Article 17, requesting $10,500 for a dog park to be located on the town-owned former Wilson McLaughlin property on Main and New Marlborough Roads, drew considerable discussion. The chief proponents, Charlie Ferris and Dennis Downing, said that at present dogs are not allowed in any Monterey parks and that having a dog park would make the town safer for dogs and would also be a social and community-building asset for the town. On the other hand, several people questioned why we need a dog park since in our rural setting there are lots of places to walk dogs. The article passed by a vote of 50 for, 36 against.

Another article occasioning much discussion was Article 18, requesting $25,000 to install a driveway and parking area at the Wilson McLaughlin property, which will accommodate cars for the community garden and proposed dog park and will also provide access for future use of the building if it is rehabilitated for community use. Joe Baker of the Wilson McLaughlin House Committee, which has been working for several years on how to make the property a useful community center, presented the current plans for the driveway, which would enter off Route 23. Opponents of the driveway, including Dick Tryon and Dean Amidon, argued that the proposed location of driveway would be dangerous because of traffic and poor visibility on Main Road and that a better solution would be to improve the old driveway off New Marlborough Road; they also questioned if it is appropriate to invest in a driveway now when the building is not usable in its present condition and the property is little used. Proponents of the driveway argued that it is needed if the property is ever to be used as a community center, that it would be used right away for the garden and dog park, and would encourage other community-building activities. The article passed.

Maureen Banner

Dick Tryon

Article 10 was considered by many citizens to be the most important. It asked if the town would approve amending the existing Southern Berkshire Regional School District agreement, which expires in 2011. The five towns in the Southern Berkshire Regional School District are Alford, Egremont, Monterey, New Marlborough, and Sheffield, and all five will have to approve the amendment for it to take effect. Select Board member Jon Sylbert, who was Monterey's representative on the committee that worked out the amendment, explained its key points to the meeting. Both the school district operating budget and capital expenditures would be apportioned among the five member towns using the so-called statutory method, a formula based on the number of students from each town, the average income of each town, and the assessed property wealth of each town. Also, and this is the most controversial

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Maureen Banner

Ozzie Dugan

part, under the amendment any school in the district could be closed by a vote of four of the towns, instead of all five as required in the present agreement. Those favoring the amendment, including Ozzie Dugan and Bob Gauthier (who said he usually doesn't agree with Ozzie), pointed out that the new approach is more democratic and that it is time to recognize that the district is a regional district not just a local Monterey one; the new agreement will make the district stronger and better for educating our children. Opponents, including Michael Storch, pointed out the obvious: if the new amendment is approved, the beloved Monterey School will almost certainly be closed by a vote of the four other towns; Storch pointed out that although the number of students in our school has been low recently, that would likely change once we have universal broadband Internet access, which will encourage more families with young children to move here. After the question was called (which upset many of the parents with young children who felt they hadn't had a proper chance to voice their strong opposition), the article was passed by secret ballot. Because all five towns have to approve the amendment (Monterey was the first to vote on it) and Egremont voters will not take up the issue until a special meeting in October, the final outcome will not be known until the fall.

Article 19 passed, granting the Lake Buel Watershed Committee $8,000 to maintain the outlet of the lake, to construct a spillway to control the flow of water, and to pay additional engineering costs for watershed study on how to reduce the lake height in anticipation of floods.

Article 26, which asked the Select Board to enter into immediate discussions with other Western Massachusetts municipalities with the intent of entering an intermunicipal agreement for the provision of broadband service, including high-speed Internet access, telephone, and cable television, to the residents of these towns, passed easily. Those of us who only have dial-up access are hopeful this might lead to a positive outcome.

These candidates for town positions were voted into office unopposed: Cynthia Weber, Board of Appeals; Stanley Ross, Assessor; Mary Makuc, Cemetery Committee; Stanley Ross, Finance Committee; Robert Annelli, Board of Health; Carolee Jervas, William Marsh, and Kenn Basler, Library Trustees; Mark Makuc, Moderator; Bettina Schwartz and Jessica Sarno, Park Commission; Stephen Enoch and Barry Karson, Planning Board; Scott Jenssen, Select Board; Anne Marie Enoch, Tax Collector; Patricia Mielke, Treasurer; and Shaylan Burkhart, Tree Warden.

— Sue Protheroe and Will Marsh

Robert Hoogs to Talk at Historical Society June 18

Did you know that you were living in Township Number One? That is the early designation of what is now Tyringham and Monterey.

On Friday, June 18, at 7 p.m., the Monterey Historical Society will host a talk by Robert Hoogs, President of Foresight Land Services, Engineers, Surveyors and Planners of Pittsfield. The program will highlight the early thoroughfares connecting the new settlements. Come to see if you live on one of these old roads that were part of the original grid layout. The roads were adapted to connect the Proprietor's Home Lots with some of Monterey early mill sites.

The Friday evening meeting will take place at the Monterey Meetinghouse (church basement) instead of the General Knox Museum. The General Knox Museum, home of the Monterey Historical Society, is being dismantled at the request of the Library Trustees, who will take over the wing for library expansion. The Society is in the process of finding temporary display places for some of Monterey's valuable historical artifacts.

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33 Towns Join WiredWest's Fiber-Optic Network

Western Massachusetts residents are working together to make universal high-speed Internet access a reality. A regional initiative, WiredWest is modeled on successful community-owned fiber-optic networks around the country. In order to join, forty-six towns unserved or underserved by broadband are being asked to vote on their participation at 2010 town meetings. By mid-May, all thirty-three towns that addressed the issue at their town meetings had passed the article — including Monterey — the Egremont Select Board has also chosen to join. Thirteen more town meetings will also be voting over the next month.

The work began last fall, when a network of citizens across Western Massachusetts, spanning Berkshire, Hampshire, Hampden, and Franklin counties, held their first meetings to seed the formation of WiredWest, a community fiber-optic network to serve unserved and underserved towns.

Fiber-optic is the fastest telecommunication technology available, capable of handling vast amounts of data at a rate hundreds of times faster than typical technologies like DSL, wireless, or cable. Fiber connectivity has the added benefit of being easily scalable to offer more bandwidth capacity as end-point equipment evolves. Sufficient capacity is becoming an issue as bandwidth usage in the U.S. doubles every two years, as more business and personal activity is conducted online.

Recent research by the Fiber-to-the-Home Council shows that a fiber-optic network is directly tied to the economic development of a region, including attraction of new businesses, greater business productivity, ease of employment expansion, more home businesses, and higher mid-week populations for vacation areas. In addition, a fiber network would enable improvements in delivery, and cost savings in education, healthcare, government services, and public safety. According to Scott Jenssen, Chair of the Monterey Select Board, "This initiative would be game-changing — not only for each town and its citizens, but for the region as a whole."

Representatives from towns that opt to participate will form the initial governing board of WiredWest. Once all towns have had the opportunity to vote, the first meeting of the organization will be convened, and pressing issues of governance and inter-municipal agreements will be addressed. The group anticipates that meeting will occur at the end of June.

WiredWest is a community organization with the mission of designing, building and operating an open-access, community-owned, fiber-optic network in member towns that would offer comprehensive, affordable, and reliable Internet, phone, and television services to all residents, businesses, and institutions that want service. Detailed information is available on the website, www.wired-west.net, where you can also join the mailing list.

— Monica Webb

Retirement Party for Susan Andersen June 19

Please come and celebrate Susan Andersen's 37-year tenure at the Monterey School. Festivities will be held at the Monterey Firehouse pavilion Saturday, June 19, from 1 to 4 p.m. (Note this is a change from the date given in last month's *News*.) We are looking for "Andersen alumnae" for a special reunion surprise. We also ask all who come to bring stories, memories, and/or a dessert to share with everyone. In 37 years Mrs. Andersen has touched a lot of lives; please come and join us in a big thank-you and good-bye. Please visit our Facebook page "Mrs. Andersen is retiring" to get up-to-the-minute information on event planning or call 528-1443 ext 248 and leave a message. Help is always welcome. Hope to see you there.

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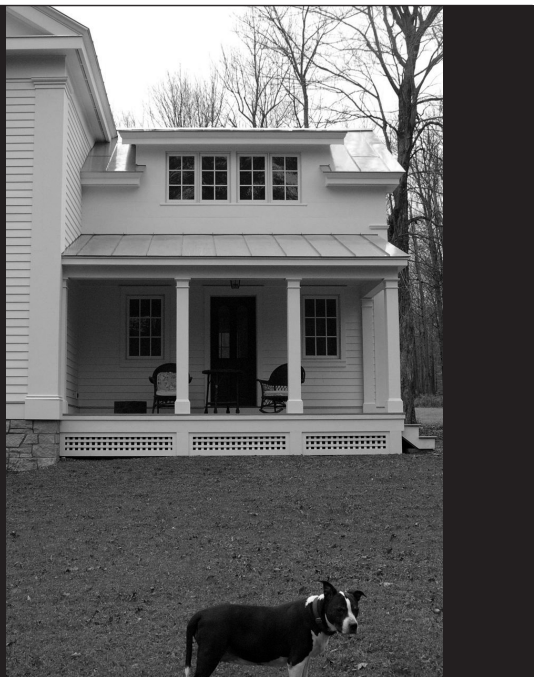

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Township No. 1 Day Saturday, July 3

Get ready for an afternoon of old-fashioned and newfangled fun, as the Bidwell House welcomes all Monterey and Tyringham residents and friends to the Art School Road fields for a free celebration of Tyringham and Monterey history. The two towns began as one—Township No. 1 at Hoosatonnuck—centered around the first meetinghouse on the museum's grounds.

To celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the museum's founding, the Bidwell House is planning a full afternoon for young and old:

Live music jam, 1 to 4:30 p.m. in the tent: folk, jazz, blues, country, and eclectic music by local musicians Peter Poirier (Monterey), Karl Finger (Monterey), Joel Schick (Monterey), Moonshine Holler (Tyringham), Pete and Steve Adams (Tyringham), and perhaps surprise guests.

For the young and young at heart: Games, crafts, popcorn, cotton candy, treasure hunt, and more.

For the brave and hearty: 11 a.m., Royal Hemlock Trail hike in the footsteps of the early Hop Brook-Tyringham settlers. Meet at the museum at 11 a.m.; a shuttle will take hikers to the trailhead at Jerusalem Road for the 1½-hour somewhat strenuous hike. Hiking boots and bug spray recommended, long skirts and knickers optional. Led by naturalist Dr. Richard Greene.

For the collector: From 1 to 2:30 p.m. in the tent by the parking lot: Antiques appraisals by Charlie Flint of Charles Flint Antiques, Lenox. Bring your treasure and for a $5 donation you can learn about its origins and approximate value.

For the local history buff: 2:30–3:30 p.m. in the Carriage Barn: "Land History of the First Settlement," a talk followed by a walk around the property led by Rob Hoogs, land planner and author of the Bidwell House Land Study.

For the gardener: 3:30-4:30 p.m. in the Carriage Barn: Colonial Gardening, a talk by master gardener and landscape designer Ruth Green, the Bidwell House Museum's official gardener.

For the baker (or the taster): 1:30 p.m.: Pie-baking contest. Bring your favorite home-baked pies or cakes and enter them in the taste-off. Prizes for the best confection.

For all: Tyringham Historical Commission exhibit of old photos newly discovered of the Hale Farm in Tyringham, Monterey Historical Society exhibit of old farm implements, and more.

For more details and to confirm times, please check our website: www.bidwellhousemuseum.org.

Township No. 1 Day is supported in part by a grant from the Monterey Cultural Council and the Tyringham Cultural Council, local agencies supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

FLG Wildlife Survey

The Friends of Lake Garfield (FLG) have funded a study of the amphibians at Lake Garfield. Happily, results show frogs, toads, newts, and turtles are in plentiful existence in and about the shores of the lake. Our wetland on the east end of the lake has been termed "a jewel" for wildlife.

What does this mean to we humans who love the lake and its native population? It means our scientifically prepared drawdown, so well executed by our town officials, has allowed the wildlife to continue their life cycles. And it also means we have data that will help us get state approval to continue these drawdowns to manage water control and minimize plant growth without resorting to chemicals. Friends of Lake Garfield, this is where a significant portion of your gifts to FLG goes. Thank YOU.

— P. Edelstein, FLG Ecology Chair

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Wildlife Report: Turtles, Waterfowl, and More

There were a few mammal sightings early in the past month: John Higgins saw a moose and calf in Sandisfield, and Margery and Cos Spagnoletti saw two foxes crossing Main Road. Bonner McAllester saw big moose tracks in the sand by a small shady pond on Hupi Road. Otherwise, April has been the month of birds, reptiles, amphibians, and insects.

One insect, conspicuous by its absence, has been the Colorado potato beetle on Hupi Road This is the second year the potatoes here have come up and reached a glorious foot or so in height, with no beetles, no clusters of orange eggs. What does it mean? On the other hand, Steve Snyder saw a spectacular firefly display on May 24 in the field across from Gige O'Connell's house, so we should count our insect blessings.

Steve also reports, early in the month, a loon on Lake Garfield—in winter plumage, or perhaps a young loon not yet resplendent. Lynn Leavitt has seen a white duck on Lake Garfield with a black head, or perhaps the other way around, quite striking in any case. (Is there any chance this is Steve's young loon?)

Carol Ingher reports the May 28th return of the red eft to her place. This one was in a mossy spot in her dog yard and headed for the woods. Carol also has a pair of rose-breasted grosbeaks.

Over in Tyringham, Sarah Hudson has a remarkable oriole sipping nectar at her hummingbird feeder, and on Hupi Road Joe Baker was visited at outdoor lunchtime by a hummingbird looking for a feeder. Joe may have been eating raspberry jam at the time; hummingbirds will go for anything red. There is even an early 1900s account of a gentleman with a large red nose who experienced a hummingbird hovering in front of his face, looking for the sugar.

Up on Brett Road, Nancy Beach reports a dog that recently encountered a painted turtle and a porcupine (not at the same time and with different results, and perhaps not even the same dog). Nancy's beaver pond is losing water but full of wildlife just the same, just no beavers. There are mergansers, wood ducks, mallards, a great blue heron, kingfishers, and a pair of Canada geese. At the house, phoebes are nesting over the basement door.

On Chestnut Hill Road, the Spagnolettis also have phoebes nesting—in the same place under the cabin eaves where they have nested every year for the last 29 years. So many generations with a true sense of place, and an appreciation for Monterey and the Spagnolettis.

Thanks to all our local observers, and please send me your sightings.

— Bonner McAllester,
bmca@berkshire.net, 528-9385.

Historian Ralmon Jon Black at June 16 Potluck

At the May Community Potluck, board members from the Monterey-based Center for Peace through Culture (CPC) discussed their current peace initiatives, the Greenagers program, and the upcoming Peace Conference at the Hancock Shaker Village in September 2011. Attendees enjoyed the participatory process "What Peace Means to Me".

For the June 16th Potluck Supper, Ralmon Jon Black, the prominent historian of Williamsburg, Massachusetts, returns to Monterey to share the fruits of his research for an historical novel on the life of Martha Leonard, born in Springfield in 1649. This was a very interesting, but exceedingly dangerous time, and the Monterey connection is that she was Sally Pullen's eighth great-grandmother.

The last potluck of the season will be held on June 16 in the Fellowship Hall of the Monterey Meetinghouse at 6 p.m. Please bring a dish to share (everyone brought desserts last time!) and a place setting and silverware for yourself. Everyone is welcome.

— Barbara Dahlman & Kyle Pierce

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Ann Higgins

Susan Andersen, "Our School Teacher"

The school day has just begun at the one-room Monterey School on a beautiful sunny morning. A half-dozen children sit on mats looking expectantly at their teacher, Mrs. Susan Andersen. It is clear they adore her. They have just finished reading the morning message written on an easel in front of them. The first line reads: "This is a splendid Friday morning."

Susan Andersen, who will officially retire in August at the age of sixty-five, has been teaching kindergarten for forty- three years. She began teaching for the Southern Berkshire Regional School District in the schoolhouse in Ashley Falls in 1967. In September of 1974, she began teaching in the Monterey School, mostly as the kindergarten teacher and occasionally as a first grade teacher. She is known to all in Monterey as "our school teacher."

When asked what has changed over the decades, she laughs, "Everything but the kids. Everyone still wants to be first and everyone loves recess and snack the best!" What has changed is the curriculum, which according to Susan is much more rigorous. Half days focusing on socializing have turned into full days with detailed academic goals and requirements. And here is where Susan's philosophy has given her a reputation of being a maverick. "If the end goal is to teach a child to read, let's work to help him learn how to read and not get caught up in whether he mixes up writing a lowercase b and d."

All kindergarten teachers have the same playbook, but Susan zigs and zags instead of just going down the middle. She starts with the class list of names when teaching the letters of the alphabet. Letters that are in the pupils' names get taught first. And she doesn't wait until later in the year to teach diphthongs as the playbook might say. "They see them in their names and they learn them the first few weeks," she says.

Teaching in a one-room schoolhouse has given her the opportunity to zig and zag. She likens it to being a homeowner and laughs about having to learn how to fix the school furnace. She is nurse, custodian, secretary, and counselor. But she believes the pros and points of interest vastly outweigh the cons. "There are outrageous advantages to a one-room school. The kids have nowhere to hide. The consequences are always there and their behavior affects everyone."

Susan's favorite subject to teach is language arts. She uses what she calls the "Andersen meatloaf." She presents a text, anything from a class list to a classic poem, and then her students pull it apart and see what it is made of.

Her love for classic poetry and inspired word is what she is best known for in the community. She teaches her pupils poems by poets such as A. A. Milne, Tennyson, and Longfellow. At the end of the school year, her students participate in a poetry recital complete with props and costumes. Parents are delighted and impressed to see their children recite from memory for almost an hour in front of a large crowd. The smiles on the children's faces show that they are confident and proud.*

Susan believes that confidence does not come from success, but from the act

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Ann Higgins

of striving. "When you work for things, you know who you are," she says. "I honor the act of trying."

She also believes that when it comes to learning, kids have different operating systems. If a child has difficulty subtracting on paper, Susan gets out the wooden rods of various lengths and asks her to find the missing add-in. "When you put a disk in a computer and it doesn't work, you don't throw the whole computer out. You try a different disk. And you keep trying until you find the language that works."

Susan feels creativity is crucial for kindergarten students. "If we had a play structure outside that was in the shape of a ship, we would have all pirates all the time. Instead we have a large rock that can be pirate ship one day and something totally different the next." Indeed, her former students often mention "Pride Rock" as the place where they prospected for gold, played pirates, acted on a stage, set up house, and nested on as birds of prey.

One former student has fond memories of a creative math lesson. The kindergarten students were in rest time, so the first graders snuck out the back door. "We had to quietly creep under the windows so the other kids didn't see us. Then we walked up and down the street and did math with all the numbers we saw on houses and signs."

It is abundantly clear that Susan loves her students as much as they love her. "I never met a five-year-old I didn't like." Then she adds with a smile, "There are some I wished were in someone else's class." She adds that five-year-olds are happy all the time and that happiness is contagious. "If you work in a kindergarten for a long time, it's like drinking from the fountain of youth—from a fire hydrant."

She tells the story of an older gentleman who said every time he drove by the school on the way to the post office he unrolled his windows so he could hear the sound of the children's "mindless exuberance." But she contends that it is not mindless, "It's who they are." It is this "unmindless" exuberance that Susan will miss most when she retires. And as for her retirement plans? Her plan is not to have a plan.

After forty-three years of lesson plans, this sounds like a reasonable wish. So, speaking for all your students, their parents, and this community, thank you, Mrs. Andersen, for the exuberance you have shown for Monterey's children. We wish you a splendid retirement.

—Mari Enoch

Mari (Makuc) Enoch was a student of Mrs. Andersen's in 1977–78. Her daughter Elisabeth was Mrs. Andersen's student for both kindergarten and first grade in 2007–09.

*This year's poetry night will be on Thursday, June 17, at 7 p.m. in the Monterey Meetinghouse.

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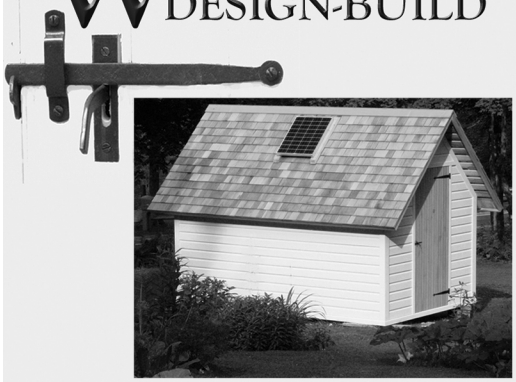

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Monterey Library Notes

A special thank-you to all who have communicated to our elected officials as well as the appointed Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners your reaction to the proposed budget cuts to the state library budget. Our Western Region is on the verge of being eliminated, and all services will face reduction and change. We have heard the legislators have heard about this more than any other cut. There's still time—and even if all you do is join "We Love Western Mass Libraries" on FaceBook you have let the people in charge know how valuable you think library service is. I know people have written, called, and even talked in person to the governor and the executive director of the Board of Library Commissioners. We still have no idea what the end result will be—so there's time yet to drop an email or call or join the fight on FaceBook. Certain services will end no matter what the resolution since the dedicated staff at the Western Region won't just walk away on June 30. Bookmobile materials are being given to all of the member libraries to put on our shelves. We are hoping that the Board of Library Commissioners will realize that our small libraries in the western part of Massachusetts need more services and rely on help that is based out here and not in Boston. Our western delivery system is unequalled in the state—but the commissioners are trying to consolidate that as well. By the next issue of the *Monterey News* the big merger questions will in all probability have been decided and we will be fighting to make sure we get our fair share of whatever services remain. Until then, please make that last phone call or look on the FaceBook We Love Western Mass Libraries to see where we stand and what needs to be done.

Save the date: Saturday, July 3, at 10:30 a.m., Professor Read-a-lot will make an encore performance and mystify the children with his magic tricks. Don't miss out! He will be the first of our Saturday series during July and August for kids to come to the library and do crafts or listen to stories. Our summer reading program will start then—we have a new supply of mood pencils to promote the program, and as always we have some nifty gifts just for signing up and more for actually reading a few books this summer.

The next big date to save is July 31 for the annual book sale. The Friends of the Library are working diligently at sorting and organizing to make this the best sale ever. If you would like to donate books (no mildewed or otherwise damaged books, no textbooks, no foreign language, and no condensed books, please) or some time to sort donated books, or even better some time helping out during the setup and cleanup of the sale, please talk to us. The proceeds from this sale will be used for the summer performances, to get matching grants, and for improvements to our building, among other things. The Friends of the Library have obtained a pass for the Frelinghuysen Morris studio in Lenox and are working on others to add to our collection of museum passes! Thank you Friends! They will be meeting on Monday, June 7, at 6:30 p.m. to discuss the book sale and the annual Friends meeting will be June 19, Saturday morning. If you'd like to get involved please come!

Finally, during the summer we are especially busy every shift. We are looking for a few volunteers who would be willing to help out with some regular tasks that do require concentration that we don't have when there is a line of people waiting to check out books. If you feel you would be regularly available on Tuesdays from 9:30 a.m.–12, Wednesdays 3–5 p.m., or Thursdays 4–6 p.m., please come in and talk to us about what would be required and how you can help us out. You wouldn't have to spend the whole shift in most cases because the tasks can be completed much quicker if you don't have to deal with running the circulation desk. We will also need backup people because for various reasons the regular volunteer may not be able to make the shift. If you qualify, you can work off some of your real estate taxes to the town by volunteering your hours. My goal is to have a volunteer for every shift during the summer—and a big thanks to our regular volunteers who already come in and help out with many of the shifts- they have made a difference.

— Mark Makuc, Library Director

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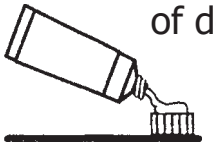

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Gwendolyn VanSant Selected for Leadership Institute for Political Impact

The Women's Fund of Western Massachusetts is proud to announce that Gwendolyn Hampton VanSant of Monterey, cofounder and Executive Director of Multicultural BRIDGE has been selected as a member of the 2010–2011 Leadership Institute for Political Impact (LIPI). A new initiative of the Women's Fund, LIPI's ten-month curriculum is designed to create a cadre of effective and powerful women leaders in our region and to train local women to run for elected office. Focusing on areas such as community organizing, the legislative process and policy-making, fundraising, and campaigning for office, LIPI gives women the tools—but more importantly the confidence— they need to become political leaders. "We believe that a critical way to address the problems facing our communities is to engage the talents and the input of women at all levels and in all sectors of decision making," said Carla Oleska, CEO of the Women's Fund. "With this project we will create wave after wave of confident, skilled, politically savvy women leaders who will be at the forefront of strengthening our communities."

Gwendolyn Hampton VanSant was publically recognized for her selection as a new Leadership Institute member on May 6 at the Delaney House in Holyoke. Her yearlong participation in the Institute runs from June 2010 through June 2011.

The Women's Fund of Western Massachusetts advances social change philanthropy to create economic and social equality for women and girls in Western Massachusetts through grant making and strategic initiatives. The program work addresses the core concerns of educational access and success, economic justice, and safety and freedom from violence. www.womensfund.net.

Town Beach and Boat Ramp to Open

The town beach will open approximately in the middle of June. There will be a space between the beach buoy lines and the fence to launch boats on the boat ramp, in the morning and in the evening when no swimmers are on the beach area. It is also available for "emergency" launching during the day.

You will notice that the Massachusetts Deptartment of Fisheries and Game has new requirements posted regarding "Clean Boat Certification." These forms must be filled out before launching. Those who launch boats to remain in the lake all season should attempt to do so before the beach opens.

When water skiing, try to do so in a counter clockwise direction, as a courtesy to other ski boats.

If you have a question call me at 528-1233.

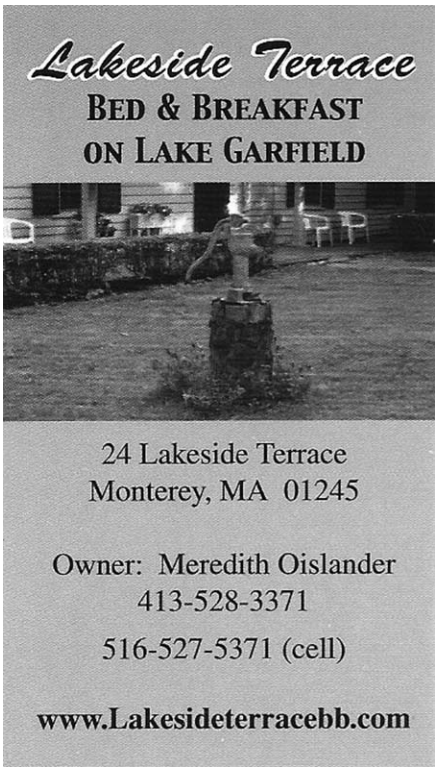
— Dean P. Amidon, Deputy Harbor Master for Lake Garfield

June 14th Lecture by Civil Rights Lawyer

The Free Legal Clinic of South Berkshire County (FLC) is collaborating with attorney Buz Eisenberg to offer a fascinating lecture Monday, June 14, 2010 at 7:30 p.m. at Monument Mountain High School on Route 7 in Great Barrington, MA. Attorney Eisenberg sued two presidents for civil rights and habeas violations against Guantanamo detainees and won, changing the course of history. On November 19, 2009, U.S. District Court Judge Gladys Kessler ruled in an 80-page opinion that Farhi Saeed bin Mohammed had been illegally detained at Guantanamo by two Presidents. The court ruled that evidence procured by torture, even years after the torture has occurred, is inadmissible in federal court.

Tickets are $10 for adults, $8 for seniors, $5 for people under 21. Please contact FLC for tickets and information at 413-854-1955 or email flcberkshire@gmail.com

The mission of the Free Legal Clinic of South Berkshire County (FLC) is to promote justice and support public interest by building strong community relationships. FLC works to connect local professionals with Berkshire County residents who are experiencing very real barriers to accessing the legal counsel they need and deserve. FLC also addresses the larger social issues that lie at the root of these gaps in the service. The demand for legal services grows monthly, primarily through word of mouth, and FLC responds to the community's needs by holding clinics, conducting interviews, and speaking publicly about the ways law and social issues interface. The Free Legal Clinic is located at 4 Pleasant Ct., Great Barrington, MA 01230.



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Stockbridge Gets Grant for Boat Wash Station

Representative "Smitty" Pignatelli announced in May that Stockbridge was rewarded a $25,000 grant for a high-temperature boat wash to decontaminate boats that may have been exposed to zebra mussels. The grant was through the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs and is part of the state's ongoing efforts to stop the spread of the highly invasive species.

As Representative Pignatelli pointed out, the grant comes at an opportune time because of the arrival of the summer boating season when local lakes and ponds will see an increase in traffic. "I am very pleased that Stockbridge was able to secure this money because the busy season is upon us and we need all hands on deck to keep the spread of the mussels to a minimum. I applaud the local officials and groups because they have done a wonderful job in educating the public about the harm and devastating impact of zebra mussels. Having this new boat wash will greatly help, but we must be on high alert and do all we can to stop the spread of these things" stated Pignatelli.

"We're very pleased with this grant, and we're working hard to get the boat wash up and operational in the very near future," said Stockbridge Selectman George Shippey.

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Free Air Sealing Available

Western Massachusetts Electric Company (WMECO) and other gas and electric utility companies offer a no-cost energy assessment to residents through Mass Save, the statewide home energy efficiency program. Eligible homes will also receive free air sealing services.

Air sealing is the measure most often recommended by energy specialists. In an older home, all the small leaks can add up to the equivalent of having a window open all winter long.

Trained air sealing technicians use materials such as caulk and foam to seal cracks and gaps in hard-to-reach areas, mostly in attics and crawlspaces. Technicians use a blower door, a high-speed fan, and gauges to depressurize a house, determine leakiness and locate leaks. After air sealing is completed, technicians run the blower door again to determine the effectiveness of their work. This process also uncovers the rare instances when homes are too tight, in which case additional ventilation is recommended.

A Mass Save home energy specialist will assess your home from basement to attic, noting air leaks and areas that need added insulation, in addition to testing heating systems and refrigerators for efficiency. At the conclusion of the assessment, the specialist will recommend cost-effective improvements that will make your home more comfortable and save money and energy. There are no income requirements to participate in Mass Save.

If recommended, the air sealing will be performed at no cost to the homeowner. Additional incentives include a utility contribution of 75 percent up to $2,000 for recommended insulation upgrades. Homeowners can apply for a 0 percent interest loan to finance insulation and high-efficiency measures including heating and hot water systems, ENERGY STAR rated windows, and solar hot water systems.

The first step is to schedule a free home energy assessment by calling Mass Save at 1-800-666-3303. To learn more, visit www.masssave.com or for tips on saving money and energy, visit www.wmeco.com.

Waste Oil Paint Collections

On Saturday, June 5, The Center for Ecological Technology (CET) will coordinate a waste paint and oil collection from 9 to 11 a.m. at the Lenox DPW. Another collection will take place on Wednesday, June 23 from 4 to 6:30 p.m. at the Great Barrington Recycling Center. Acceptable materials are oil-based paint, stains, paint thinners, and turpentine, as well as waste motor oil.

Latex paint will not be accepted. Empty or dried-up cans of latex paint can be disposed with the regular trash. Usable paint can be given away through freecycle.org or some nonprofits.

Advance registration with CET is required. To register or for information about what can be brought to this collection, visit www.cetonline.org or email jamiec@cetonline.org. Or call CET at 413-445-4556 ext. 10 or 30.

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sounds like a bull horn

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his mating call at night
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he takes flight
The woodcock
makes strange noises in the air
To help let other males know
he is there

During the day
the woodcock doesn't make a sound
Even though
he might be around
So if you listen
real hard at night
you could
be able to see his flight

— Isabel Bronson

Spring

The clouds
will cry
The wind
will whistle
The birds
will chirp joyfully
The pig
will grunt
The cow
will moo

The flowers
will bloom
Baby goats
will be born
The wonders
of spring
will come
again
and again

— Julia Bronson

Hard times

I was son of a Samurai warrior
brother of an innocent angel
grandson of a tailor and lumber jack
nephew of a fire spitting lioness

I had two princes
they went to fight the dragon
to win the princess
to begin the new reign

there's a baby in the sky
there's a baby on the shore
there's a baby in the wind
new wines come from old vines

it's a time for poems
it's a time for love of children
it's time for love of self
a time for time out, maybe next time

easy times melt into hard times
love blends into ripe wine
riches escape on the east wind
evolution,

revolution,

resurrection

— Bobby Hirsch

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From the Meetinghouse . . .

Here's a concept I recently came across: the middle voice. If you studied ancient languages, you may already be acquainted with it. But we who are monolinguists wholly reliant on modern English might have it only as a hunch—the hunch that there's something between being active in our autonomy and being passive, which is to say being acted upon. We might have it only on the hunch that there's a complex realm somewhere in the middle where the individual can act only in relation and response to ongoing action. We're not so individual as we might have once believed, our hunch might tell us. We're not so autonomous as our culture and its language tend to proclaim. Surely there's a way to speak of this truth.

Well, the modern active voice implies that such autonomous action is not only real, but also the only action really worth talking about. This is, after all, the primary voice of our speaking—it names the sort of activity caused by a subject acting on an object. Our other option, the passive voice, as we know from every English teacher we've ever encountered, is to be avoided. (That's a laugh line, since I used the passive voice to say that. It's actually William Safire's laugh line, the popular grammarian who passively advised, "The passive voice should never be used.") And so it is largely avoided—except by me at this moment and by most public figures when forced to admit upon discovery that mistakes were made, affairs were had, and if people were hurt or an offense was caused then an apology is offered.

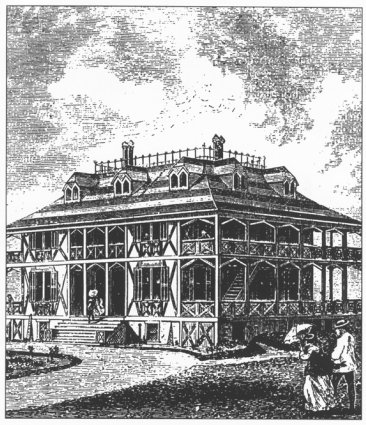
The middle voice speaks to a reality that dwells between these two. Properly defined, "The middle voice is that use of the verb which describes the subjects as participating in the results of the action." Personally demonstrated, when I speak of myself in the middle voice, I recognize my active participation in an ongoing action to an end that isn't wholly mine and that I might not even know. Faithfully felt, this is the language of the God of the Bible who acts in history and is active in our lives, and of the people of God whom God calls and activates for God's active purposes to ends that are God's alone.

That's not just my faith talking. It's a historic fact. Biblical Hebrew and Greek both feature prominently the middle voice. Jesus, like his forebears, spoke a language that featured, while no passive voice at all, the middle voice as primary. Really, it might even be said that, without the voice by which the Bible largely speaks, the faith the Bible tells of would be impossible—something that could well explain our modern collective disbelief. We've lost the voice of the Biblical faith and so we've largely lost biblical faith.

I write this on the chance that you've been searching for a mode to account for the way your life interplays with the terrible grandeur of this world. If you have been, if you've struggled to conform your lived experience to the strictures of modern orthodoxy, you might also be interested to know that we speak in the middle voice at church. This is the voice of prayer—demanding not that prayer "work," have some specific purpose and measurable end, but that it be a moment for communion with God and God's creation. This is the voice of relationship where two or more wills come together to create something each could not have willed on his or her own. Really, this is the voice of the Holy Spirit, the aspect of God that is active in our lives and the life of the world.

If this is a language you'd like to learn, stop by some Sunday morning. If this is a language you believe might just be your native tongue, as it is for me, you might find a home on this corner of Tyringham and Main. Be assured that, though the congregation pleasures in the way we are—small in number, deep in faith—we welcome change, too. We welcome any who might also like to join us.

— Elizabeth Goodman



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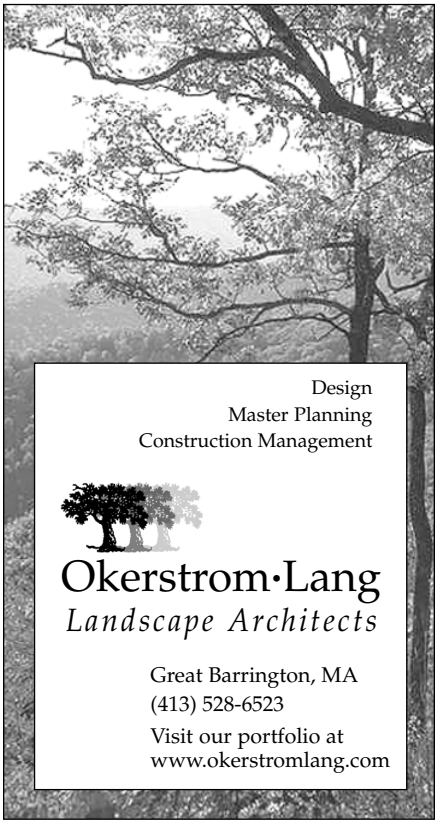

One Year Later

The Middlebury graduation of 2011 happens tomorrow morning. I sat down to write this article with a distinct lack of inspiration—some topics seem repetitive and others seem fleeting or mundane. Yes, occasionally writer's block happens. Then I realized what a significant milestone had arrived, almost without me realizing it. One year ago I received my diploma, on a rainy morning that gave way to sun, surrounded by family and friends. I remember the tremendous joy, and the sense of exhaustion that gave way to relief and the feeling of accomplishment. This time last year, in "Graduation Day," I wrote: "Singing my way down Route 7 for the last time, I cannot begin to reflect what the future will offer, or what these last few hours signify." A new chapter began that day, and it seems like an appropriate time to bring it to a close.

In the past year, new milestones led to new adventures, and time off from school allowed me to create a balance, connect with friends in the city, and learn how to cook. That is one of my greatest accomplishments, feeling so much more at ease in the kitchen. I feel as though DC is more my home now, and that I understand its neighborhoods and boroughs. I get what it is to be a commuter, and to plan ahead for my week and take care of household chores on the weekends. I respect the experience of college, and what skills and lessons transfer over to my daily life; believe me, there are many that do not. I love that I spent evenings or weekends in early May drinking lemonade and working on the patio—there were no exams or papers to edit in the final thirty minutes before the deadline. I take

Toby Frank and Chris Clark at the May 29th plant sale at community garden

things in stride more these days, and it takes a great deal more to overwhelm me. Frustrations at work are left at the office most times, gone are the tasks or checklists that constantly follow me around 24-7. My boss's disposition, her attitude on life gradually influenced me in the way I deal with the day-to-day challenges in my job; and it is for the better I might add.

I'll be moving, sometime this summer or fall, and beginning the housing search in DC is both daunting and exciting. Staying with Roosevelt for another year provides a secure backdrop in my pursuit of new accommodations and activities. I recently began training for my new press and communication responsibilities that begin in September. We are preparing for a shift into summer mode, when our summer academy class begins; there are projects to supervise, new students to mentor, and the exciting prospect of some longer weekends off. The publication series is in the final stages, editing and layout, before it goes to press. We are moving offices next week, and that prevents my return to Monterey for the holiday weekend; my first time not to be attending the parade. Before I know it, August will be here and a new year of work will begin—another milestone.

I can close a chapter on the transition from college to the real world. There is much left to learn and try and experience, but to feel comfortable and confident about the world around you is to believe that a transition is over. It was an easy one in most ways, but I still remember when I graduated last year—not knowing where I was going or what I wanted to do in the future. Moving out, forward, or up in the world will form the outline or plot of this next chapter. Once again, I cannot wait to start writing.

— Tarsi Dunlop

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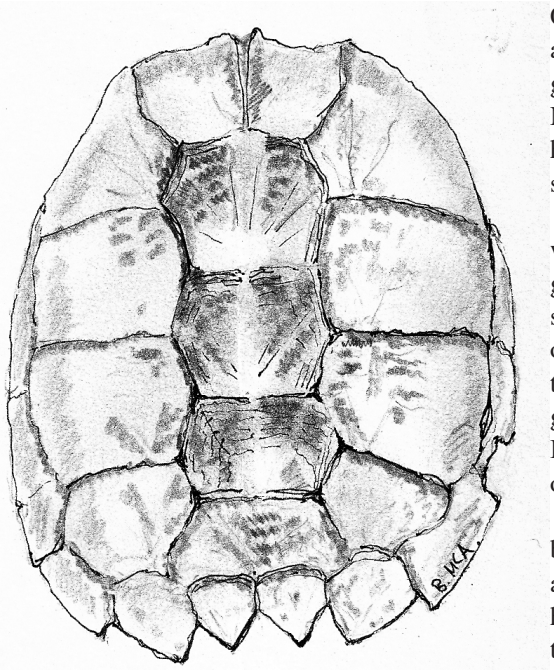
Turtle in the Fast Lane

This is the time the female snapping turtles leave their safe ponds and lakes to risk all for the continuation of their species. They don't see it this way, of course. They only know they have to swim to the edge of the universe and climb over, to a dangerous land where they normally never would go. In the course of their normal days, they often get up on a half-submerged log or a beaver house to soak up some heat when all is quiet on the water. From these sunning places it's easy for them to slip back into the water and swim to safe depths. They do not go walking except in spring.

In mid-May on a Sunday morning, I hit the highway for central Connecticut to watch seven hundred young folks in an Ivy League launch, to hear some grand speechifying on the general theme of One's Work Ahead. There were the young people in crimson: healthy, wealthy, and wise. They were handsome, too, and exuberant. Their parents, with aching wallets, sat proudly in the sun getting it all on camera. Their teachers, in the fabulous plumage of their own launchings, sat tolerantly behind them: another May, another Commencement.

A little earlier, out on Route 9 a mile north of town, this had just happened: I was cruising along with time to spare, thinking ahead to the coming parking challenge around campus, minding my own business. The traffic wasn't too thick, but it was fast. My radar blipped and I switched off the parking issue. What's that big black item in the road? Cars were moving to avoid it. I figured it was a big piece of truck tire—nothing else could be that big and black. I even had a flash of regret that on this divided highway in a built-up area, there's no way the object could be anything "natural," like a dead body. I always weep for the roadkills, at the same time that I perk up with curiosity as to what lives (lived) around here and was out last night. Porcupine? Fisher? Otter, maybe? Around home I pull over and go back, taking the opportunity to get a good look at feet, teeth, anything. Now and then I bring the poor critter home just because it is so beautiful, and sometimes because it is so edible.



Snapping turtle carapace, found during winter draw-down of Lake Garfield.

All these thoughts in a flash: I wish it were a fisher so I could get a good look. Glad it's not because how sad that would be. Gotta be a big piece of rubber, gotta keep out of the way of that blue car that is switching lanes, glad it's not in MY lane, good thing I don't hang in the fast lane . . . these other drivers, honestly!

And then, new information. This big piece of rubber is on the move. It has a head and four legs. By heavens, it is a huge black snapper, headed east across this impossible road. I bet she's come up out of the river to lay her eggs and is now headed back. Or maybe she's up out of that wetland on the right, looking for the best possible gravel bank with the perfect exposure so she can bury her precious cargo.

In a few seconds I was on down the road, making my exit, working out the parking. All through the day that mama snapper stayed with me, though. She was launching her kids, headed for Turtle Commencement. On the same stretch of highway on the way home I had my antennae out, scanning the lanes and shoulders for any sign that "in the beginning is the end," but I did not see her, and I would have. She made it, just like the seven hundred graduates. She did her big work and went on to the next thing, in spite of acres of asphalt and hurtling steel.

Just as I was feeling fine about this launching day, I saw the flashing lights, the emergency vehicles, the workers in orange vests and the bright yellow blanket on the ground. The tall slim utility pole by the exit ramp was shattered above its base, was lying near the blanket, and near the motorcycle. Pole and motorcycle, both lay on their sides, out of commission. Someone will patch them up and they will rise

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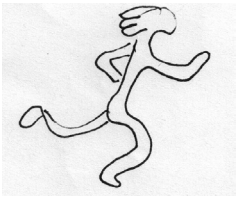
again, but not the form under the blanket. This Commencement Day was that poor creature's end.

What exactly happened? It doesn't matter: a death is a death. Two students of the class of seven hundred were memorialized in a powerful period of silence. No Commencement for them: one lost on the highway, one to a handgun.

Those turtle eggs. They may have been dug up by a raccoon or a skunk by now. They may make it into the pond and disappear down the maw of a largemouth bass, which later gets hooked by some Ivy League graduate in a bass boat who climbs onto his motorcycle at the end of the day and takes out a utility pole.

My advice, to turtles and to graduates? Avoid that fast lane, damn it. The end which is your beginning will come soon enough.

— Bonner J. McAllester



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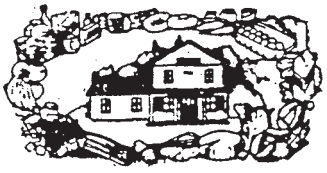

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Bidwell House Events

Bidwell House Museum Docent Training: Friday, June 4, noon

Anyone interested in being a docent at the museum is invited for a brown-bag lunch training session with the museum staff. Curious if this might be for you? Come join us to find out! Docents volunteer one to four days a month during the summer.

Restoring the 1740s Deacon Hale House: Saturday, June 12, 10 a.m.

Have you been wondering what is going on with the colonial-era home at the corner of Tyringham and Art School Roads? Come to the Bidwell House Museum to hear Michael White of Michael White Contractors talk about his work there. White, who has worked on numerous early American homes in the Berkshires, will tell about his fascinating yearlong project restoring the historic Monterey home. He is highly knowledgeable about building techniques and materials of the 1700s. This talk will be of interest to all aficionados of colonial-era houses and those who are interested in methods to restore them.

Colonial History Lecture Series

The Bidwell House Museum is pleased to announce this summer's Bidwell Museum Colonial History Series. John Demos, Samuel Knight Professor of American History Emeritus at Yale University and distinguished author, will present "The Lost World of Early America," four sessions that will consider aspects of everyday life in the colonial period, with special emphasis on eighteenth-century New England.

Saturday, June 26: "The Experiential World: Rhythms and Regularities of Daily Life in the 1700s"

Saturday, July 10: "The Social World: Getting Along With Others"

Saturday, August 14: "The Cultural World: Ways of Communication"

Saturday, August 28: "The Supernatural World: Religion, Magic, Witchcraft, and Wonders"

Join us for any one talk or register for the whole series. It is sure to be a fascinating program. Professor Demos will suggest some readings and discussion is invited in each session. Preregister by calling or emailing the museum at 413-528-6888, bidwellhouse@gmail.com. Reserve your place now! *All meetings will take place on Saturdays at 10 a.m. at the Tyringham Union Church, Main Road, Tyringham (a five-minute drive from the Bidwell House Museum).*

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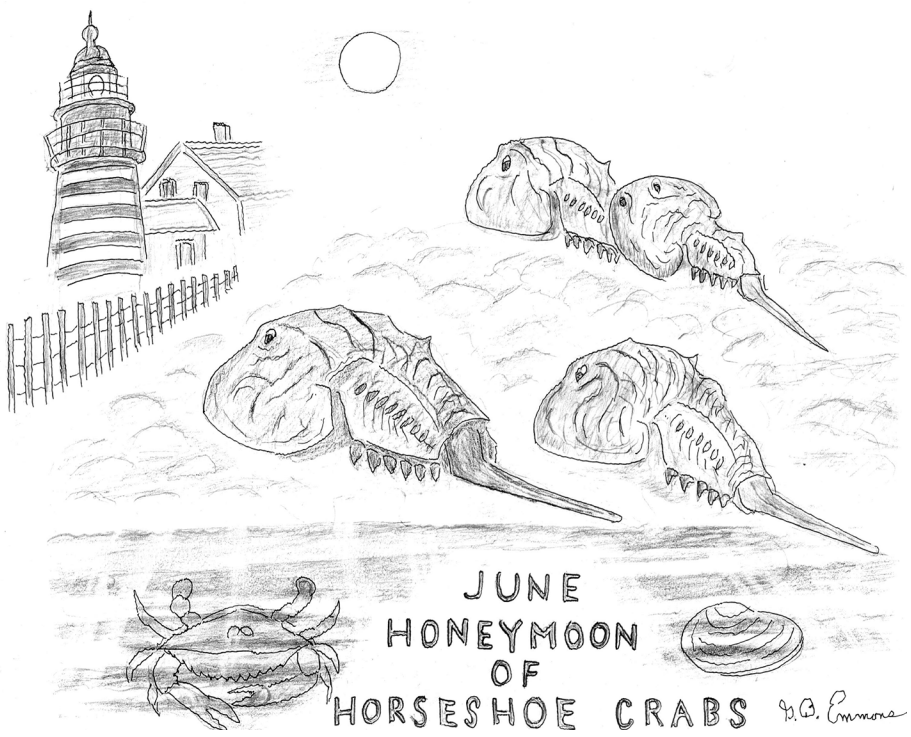
Living on the Environmental Edge



All too often prime-time news breaks a story of another environmental impact on our coastal waters. The latest was the recent oil spill off Louisiana endangering the ecosystems over a gigantic area. Before that, although somewhat less disastrous, the Massachusetts legislature approved the installation of a battery of wind turbines in the scenic waters off Nantucket Sound. Utilizing natural forces to supplement energy power for human comfort and choosing a site for the turbines' foundations in shallows called Horseshoe Shoals are probably far less risky than the possibility of an oil-rig drilling accident a mile below the surface of the water.

Almost annually, the migration of the red tide down the coast of Maine toward Massachusetts closes shellfish beds to a fishing industry already handicapped under new state legal catch limits and other curtailments. According to a professor of aquaculture at Roger Williams University in Rhode Island, aquaculture, using commercial growing methods, now supplies almost 80 percent of all shellfish consumed in New England. On April 19 of this year, the *Boston Globe* ran an article announcing that now for the first time horseshoe crabs can be induced to spawn in captivity, and the hatchlings' growth can be speeded up by adjusting the protein content of their food, using ingredients ranging from brine shrimp to fish food.

The horseshoe crab along our brackish tidal coastal environmental edges is an ancient arthropod dating back three hundred million years that has in modem times played a vital medical role. Their blue-colored blood is utilized to test and insure the safety of drugs for humans by detecting traces of bacteria like E. coli and pathogens that can cause meningitis. U. S. Fish & Wildlife has recently adopted restrictive measures to protect their mating ritual for the five days of June when, under a full or new moon, they appear on the sandy beaches to lay their eggs. There the male clasps the carapace of the larger female while she drags him along to the nest where he fertilizes her eggs.

The brine shrimp used to feed tiny horseshoe crabs under artificial conditions have also been brought to the Berkshire Hatchery. The shrimp come in cans from Salt Lake City and then are hatched in a conical tank to feed the latest batch of nineteen thousand Atlantic salmon fry These are our latest class of candidates to be introduced as two-year-old smolts into Connecticut rivers to supplement the minute numbers of returning fish from a thousand-mile journey to Greenland and back. Although it is now known that changing ocean currents make this more difficult, hopefully our first class from several years ago is about to show up, which will be a truly satisfying reward of consequence.

If that is about to happen, then the expertise of our hatchery will have contributed significantly to reverse the growing trend of our ecosystems falling off the environmental edge

— George B. Emmons

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The Nurse's Revenge

After weeks of being victimized by a sneak thief on the maternity ward, Gretchen Sanders, R.N., had nearly given up on brown bagging it for lunch. Gretchen took pride in her culinary efforts, including the fresh fruit salads and creative veggie cuisine she carried with her each morning to St. Elizabeth's. But she endured the same disappointment almost every day at noon when she opened the refrigerator in the nurses' lounge, only to find that her lovingly prepared bag lunch was gone, even when she tried hiding it behind several large bottles of ginger ale. Even worse, this forced her to race to the cafeteria and scarf down a cup of artificially flavored yogurt in order to get back to the floor on time. At the conferences between shifts she inquired of her colleagues, "Does anyone have any idea who's stealing my lunch?" But the labor floor was a busy place; no one had time to observe what was happening in the lounge.

Then, at last, a breakthrough. A sympathetic male aide reported that he had seen Dr. Jenkins, a corpulent anesthesiologist who fancied himself a gourmand, skulking out of the nurse's lounge with a hint of paper bag protruding from his lab coat. Gretchen briefly considered a confrontation, but then her eyes twinkled as she formulated her delicious revenge.

That night she baked a batch of brownies from scratch, but in place of the cocoa ingredient she substituted a heaping measure of chocolate flavored laxative. The next morning she packed the brownies in a paper bag, shared her plan with the other nurses as well as the aide who had tipped her off, and placed the bag in the refrigerator, carefully hiding it again behind the ginger ale. Predictably, when she checked at noon the bag was gone.

Then she waited, furtively observing Dr. Jenkins as he moved about the labor floor. But to her surprise, nothing happened. He behaved normally, chatting amiably without a trace of visible discomfort. The other nurses exchanged glances with Gretchen as they passed in the hall, shaking their heads in disbelief at Jenkins' lack of reaction.

Finally it was three p.m., the end of the day shift. They closed the door and discussed it at their change-of-shift conference. "Nuthin'!" one of them said. "I can't believe it! The guy must have an iron stomach!" But Gretchen wasn't deterred. She volunteered to stay on for a while to assist the evening crew.

And then it happened. At 4:15 the male aide reported that Dr. Jenkins was in the bathroom. Gretchen quickly went into action. She entered a text message on the nursing desk computer, directing it to the doctor's beeper. "*Emergency! Low blood pressure. Patient in shock, room 102*!" Within seconds there was a loud clatter as the door to the men's room flew open and banged into the adjoining wall. Jenkins exited at full speed, dashing past the nursing station with a three-foot stream of toilet paper flying out of the back of his scrub suit. He rushed into 102 but quickly exited, looking befuddled because the room was empty. Only when he took in the raucous reaction from the nursing staff did he realize he'd been pranked.

After exchanging high fives, the nurses turned to congratulate their co-conspirator, but Gretchen was already out the door, grinning broadly, and looking forward to a tasty multigrain wrap with sprouts and garbanzo beans for tomorrow's leisurely lunch.

— David Shifrin

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Talking With Susan Sellew

Who doesn't know about Rawson Brook Farm goat cheese! I've been enjoying it for years but somehow never met the remarkable woman behind the label. Recently Susan Sellew and I stood on a cold, windy patch near her vegetable garden and admired all her little baby goats jumping around in the pasture. It was an easy thing to forget about the weather while we talked about how she came to make her fantastic cheese.

First of all, have you really had 87 baby goats born here this season?

Actually we've had more – almost 100. We select for milk production, and we have found the goats that have multiple births to be the best milk producers. Over time we've had more babies each spring. We had two does give birth to quintuplets this year. And the yearlings are still pregnant, so we'll have more than 100 babies before the birthing season is out.

How long do they produce milk each year?

They'll be producing all summer, and then in October we will breed them again. The does can produce milk through about half of their pregnancy, so they'll keep going until about December. After that I take a few weeks to sleep!

How did you get started on this land?

This was part of my dad's land. We cleared seven acres for pasture. It took 83 days! We set up a sawmill and milled the pine to build the barn. We cut and split the hardwood and sold it to pay for the hire of a bulldozer that could remove the stumps. Now when I look at this land I can't believe it was ever different—but it really was covered with trees. The goats don't like to graze much, though, so we feed them high quality hay. We feed western alfalfa during milking season and local grass hay through the rest of the year.

What was your inspiration for getting involved in this business?

My former husband and I really were homesteaders in the early 1970s, but it goes back farther than that. My dad built a cabin across the road from here when I was four, so I knew this land pretty well. I went to college at Antioch and then came back briefly to open a leather store in Great Barrington where the Eagle Shoe Repair is now. I had actually landed a job working in the Boston Public Library. It sounded like a great idea, but they put me in the basement doing filing all day. I lasted three days—and finally I just couldn't stay awake. So I bolted and came out to

Hannah Jacobson-Hardy

Great Barrington to start a leather shop. In college I had been an art education major and studied pottery and weaving, so making leather jackets and sandals was an easy step.

I did that for four months and then went to Colorado to live. I made orange and purple (as well as brown) leather hot pants and sold them on The Hill in Boulder. Finally we went to the Whole Earth Catalog store and spent the last money we had on books—one on bees, one on growing food, and one on raising goats. We packed up and moved to Maine and found an old farmhouse to rent for $25 a month. I didn't sleep at all the night before our first goats arrived, and I had no idea that I would find raising goats so enjoyable. They turned out to be practical, friendly, and even good to take on hikes.

We stayed in Maine for a year and then found a 260-acre farm to buy in upstate New York. I was 22 years old at the time—it seems hard to imagine now. We

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Hannah Jacobson-Hardy

had a mortgage of only $100 a month, but even that was hard to make sometimes. I was so involved in homesteading—one year we only spent $200 at the grocery store the whole year. We grew and made everything—honey, syrup, ketchup—I mean everything. We also grew the oats and barley to feed the goats. Once I tried harvesting wild rice with a friend—we took a canoe out on Black Lake and worked at it all afternoon, and we got enough to stuff one medium sized chicken! But to me this was not a failure because I learned something.

How did you get involved in cheese making?

I met a Frenchwoman from Montreal who introduced me to making cheese. You see, where we lived in St. Lawrence County in northern New York, everyone shared what they knew. St. Lawrence County was the poorest county in the state—average family income was under $4,000 per year. But they were the most generous, lovely people you could want to meet. When you went visiting, you always brought a shovel and a box with you and traded plants. Then you went inside and had a meal with the family, and you had a story to tell about those plants.

Anyway, I liked cheese making but there was no market for it in northern New York, so we came back here to Monterey. I figured that if we could do it anywhere, it would be here—halfway between New York and Boston. That was 1978, and I became really attached to this land. We had the county soil map and could tell what the water table was, where would be wet and where would be dry, and we were able to plan our land use very carefully.

Is that your house on the hillside behind us?

Yes, although that was not the first house on the site. The first house burned down years ago when we were away. Everyone in the community was so supportive and helped us until we could build another house. I felt so embraced and cared for by these people. It was a huge lesson in learning to accept help from others

You have an amazing garden.

Thanks. I used to be a market gardener but now I grow food for our own use here. Everyone who works here gets to eat really well. We freeze a lot, store squash, potatoes, onions, and garlic in the basement and try to keep things going all year. It's a way of life.

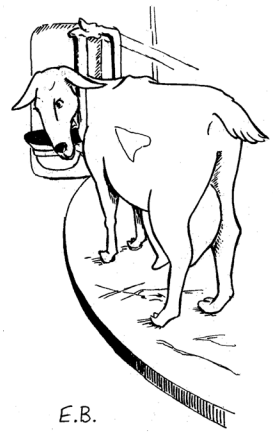
Tell me about the cheese production.

We milk the goats twice a day. With 40 to 45 goats, it takes nearly three hours to milk and clean up. We make cheese every other day, about 500 pounds per week. Mostly we have repeat customers

Hannah Jacobson-Hardy

at this point. It used to be that we sold half of the cheese to New York and Boston, but now I would say that 85-90 percent of our business is right here in Berkshire County. I don't make a lot of money at this but it is the lifestyle that I have chosen and I belong here on this farm.

— Ruth Green



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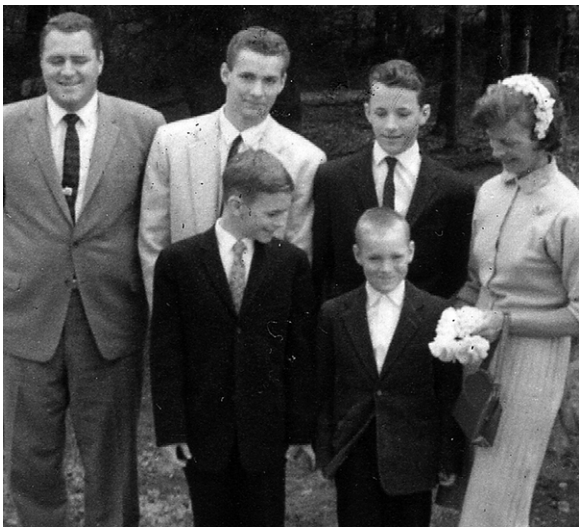
Frannie and Dean Amidon: 65 Years of Marriage!

Sixty-five years ago, this month, twenty-one-year-old Dean Amidon married nineteen-year-old Franny Robertson in Worcester. Here are some reminiscences from a few of their extensive progeny.

Skippy (#1 son) writes: a special thank-you to Mom for teaching us to swim and for keeping us in touch with family and each other. Dad for trying his best to get us to study hard, taking me hunting and fishing, Little League, vacations, skiing, and tolerating bringing up four boys. Both of them for making us what we are, and really staying in love with each other and our family.

Peter (#2 son) writes: I have vivid winter memories of our whole family skating together on our little pond and on Lake Garfield, often with friends. We went cross-country skiing together around Monterey before there was cross-country skiing, and we all went sledding on Tryon's Hill next to Route 23. We would just stay at home on Christmas Day and our house filled up with some of our favorite neighbors and friends.

Mary Alice (Peter's wife): Peter and I and our two sons, Sam and Stefan, live and breathe music, which I know is in large part due to the Amidon genes. Fran grew up in a very musical household, and when Dean was little he had a paying job singing in a boys choir. Fran and Dean have always been my role models for how to live a life in the healthiest of ways from exercise to relaxation, from social involvement to family devotion.



The Amidon Family, 1962

Phillip (#3 son) writes: Prior to the Surgeon General's announcement in 1964 that smoking causes cancer, a coffee-drinking, cigarette-smoking Mom would gruffly get us up to go to school. Then, after that announcement, she quit smoking and things soon changed. I did not recognize that bright, chipper voice, clapping hands, yelling up the stairs, "Up an' at 'em! Let's go, time for breakfast!" Since then, she hasn't changed from her (new) self in these last 46 years.

Jay (#4 son) remembers stories Dad told of the hardships of living through the Depression and his resultant "patient old New England do-it-yourself values. Mom's Nova Scotian father, George Robertson ("Pop"), and Mom's mother, Frances Keyes ("Nana"), were both very musical, and the whole family (George, Frances and the three children David, Miriam, and Frannie) would sometimes perform as a family around Worcester.

Shannon Lee (Skippy's eldest) writes: Since we've had the studio, I can see Grampa and Gramma in all weather, walking past our window—together. They always answer, "Beautiful!" to the question "How was it?" And I know they mean more than just weather. How many times do they stop what they are doing to invite someone to sit and talk? How many times have we seen people seek them out for the way they listen? I'm sure none of us could count the number of times folks have stopped by the cottage to chat, and none of us could replicate the way they are made to feel a part and not apart.

(*Go to www.amidonmusic.com/DeanAndFran60th.html for 2005* Monterey News *article on Fran and Dean.*)

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Remembering George Norian

George Norian, 78, died at Fairview Commons Nursing and Rehab Center on March 1, 2010, where he was a resident since 2000.

George was named as one of the "Berkshire Heroes" in February 2002 by the *Berkshire Eagle*. Throughout the years George has been frequently in the news for his model works of volunteer service.

George worked for 16 years as a night watchman at Gould Farm in Monterey. Since retiring, he has been volunteering a lot. He volunteered at the Undermountain Elementary School in Sheffield, reading stories and helping children with their homework, and in the New Marlborough Public library where he talked to children.

A memorial service for George was held on May 15 at Monterey United Church. Expressions of sympathy in George's memory may be made to Gould Farm or to Fairview Commons, both in care of Birches-Roy Funeral Home, 33 South Street, Great Barrington, MA 01230.

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Remembering Carolyn Kiblinger Mandel

Carolyn Kiblinger Mandel, a 17-year part-time resident of Monterey, died after a long illness at her home in Port Washington, NY, on May 13 at the age of 72.

She was born and raised on a farm in Flint, MI, one of four children of John and Carol Carey Kiblinger. She graduated from The University of Chicago in 1959, married fellow U of C graduate Maurice Mandel, and settled immediately in Port Washington, where she taught junior high school English for several years before raising a family.

She sang in numerous choral groups over the years, including summer performances at the Berkshire Choral Festival. In New York, she was a longtime patron of the Metropolitan Opera and active member of the Knickerbocker Yacht Club.

Her artistic talents were evident in her gardens and homes in Port Washington and Monterey and in her floral design business, which enhanced many weddings and other special occasions over the years. She was a leader and early driving force in the reclamation and beautification of Baxter's Pond Park near her New York home. She spearheaded the complete restoration and renovation of the historic old sanctuary of The Community Synagogue in Port Washington. This chapel was the site of a memorial service for Carolyn Mandel on May 16.

She is survived by her husband of 51 years; sons David (Kathie) of Wilton, CT, Jack (Tina Eck) of Cabin John, MD, and Paul (India Wood) of Boulder, CO; brothers Stephen and David Kiblinger, sister Katherine Gottschalk; and seven grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers, contributions in her memory can be made to Lake Garfield Assoc., the Baxter's Pond Foundation, or the Port Washington Library Foundation.

Remembering Alan Fliesler

Alan Fliesler, who died on May 3 two weeks before his 79th birthday, was son of the late Joseph Fliesler and Evelyn Fliesler, and brother of the late Martin Fliesler. He is survived by wife Christine, daughters Victoria, Nancy, and Marni, and granddaughter Martine. A lifelong resident of Sunnywide and Woodside, Queens, he attended Music & Art High School ('48), Queens College ('52, Phi Beta Kappa), and Cooper Union ('56), then worked as an art director and designer at several advertising agencies, primarily Ted Bates Worldwide (which later became a subsidiary of the Saatchi & Saatchi Company of London), and later in the sales promotion field. His accounts included Wonder Bread, Hefty, Palmolive Liquid (the "Madge the Manicurist" campaign), the US Armed Forces (recruiting ads), AARP, Prudential Insurance, Dr. Scholl's, and Mars. He also taught advertising at Parsons School of Design.

Fliesler was also a fine artist whose works were exhibited in galleries in New York City and Long Island, and was still actively producing art at the time of his death. He was a devoted choral singer and long-time board member of Camphill Village, Inc., an alternative community for adults with cognitive disabilities.

His artwork can be viewed at http://www.art-3000.com/artist/?id=1454.

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We thank the following folks for their recent contributions in response to our annual appeal. Your support encourages us and makes it possible for us to continue publishing our community paper.

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Otis Arts Festival July 24

The Third Annual Otis Arts Festival will take place on Saturday, July 24, 2010, from 9 a.m.–3 p.m., at the Farmington River Elementary School, 555 Main Road (Rte. 8), Otis. This year a large number of artists and artisans will be featured from Otis, Monterey, Blandford, Great Barrington, Lee, West Stockbridge, Williamstown, Southfield, Tolland, Northampton, Chicopee, and Connecticut. Many forms of media will be represented—oil and watercolor painting, photography, woodcarvings, jewelry, knitted and quilted objects, hand-painted glass and wood, bead and fiber work, and stained glass. Entertainment will feature Moonshine Holler, Appalachian fiddlers and singers (11 a.m.–1 p.m.), Henry the Juggler (11 a.m.), Leland Martin, fiddler, and Joe Dziok, accompanist (1:15–3 p.m.). Admission is FREE. This event is supported in part by a grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council. Information: 413 269-0220.

Sandisfield Arts Center Passes Available at Monterey Library

Imagine that you could go free to the fabulous events in the genuine theater at the Sandisfield Arts Center, only twenty minutes from Monterey through the scenic hills.

You can! Get to the Monterey Library and borrow a pass (there are ten available for each and every performance this year).

The passes are made possible by a Sandisfield Arts Center grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council through the Monterey Cultural Council. Go. Have fun. Free!

A small sampling of what is in store:

Vaudeville on Wheels with Karl Saliter, June 12, 7 p.m.
Bobby Sweet, June 26, 8 p.m.
An Evening with Ben Luxon and Simon Winchester, July 10, 8 p.m.
Kathleen Callahan, Soprano, August 7, 8 p.m.
Bill Staines, August 28, 8 p.m.
Joel Brown, guitar, with Frank Brown, clarinet, September 25, 8 p.m.

The Sandisfield Arts Center says, "Reservations are strongly recommended. While reservations guarantee you a seat, seating is on first come, first served basis." You can see the full schedule at: (www.sandisfieldartscenter.org) or at the Monterey Library.

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Calendar

Every Monday except holidays: Select Board meeting, 4 p.m., Town Hall.

Every Sunday through October: Softball at Greene Park, 9:30 a.m.

Friday, June 4: Bidwell House Museum Docent Training, noon, Bidwell House Museum, 100 Art School Road. See p. 19.

Monday, June 7: Friends of Monterey Library meeting, 7 p.m., Monterey Library. See p. 12.

Thursday, June 10: Free Blood Pressure Clinic, Town Hall Meeting Room, 2–3 p.m.

Saturday, June 12:

Talk by Michael White on restoring the 1740s Deacon Hale House, 10 a.m., Bidwell House Museum, 100 Art School Road. Picnic lunch available. See p. 19.

Old Fashioned Ice Cream Social, 6 p.m., Sandisfield Arts Center, 5 Hammertown Road, Sandisfield. Free.

Vaudeville on Wheels with Karl Saliter, 7 p.m., Sandisfield Arts Center. Adults $10, children $5.

Monday, June 14: Lecture by Civil Rights Lawyer Buz Eisenberg, 7:30 p.m., Monument Mountain High School, Rt. 7, Gt. Barrington. See p. 13.

Wednesday, June 16: Community Potluck Dinner, 6 p.m., Meetinghouse Fellowship Hall. Program by historian Ralmon Jon Black on his new novel. See p. 9.

Thursday, June 17: Poetry Reading by Monterey Kindergarten, 7 p.m., Monterey Meetinghouse.

Monterey News

The *Monterey News* is an independent nonprofit corporation dedicated to fostering communication in the Monterey community. Our editorial address is P. O. Box 9, Monterey, MA, 01245. We invite signed letters, articles, drawings, poetry, and photographs. Submissions may also be left in the drop box on the loading dock of the General Store. Address requests for advertising rates and further information to the Editor, or telephone us at 413-528-4347 or e-mail montereynews9@gmail.com.

Friday, June 18: Robert Hoogs talk on early local colonial thoroughfares, Monterey Historical Society, 7 p.m. Meetinghouse basement. See p. 6.

Saturday, June 19:

Retirement Party for Monterey School teacher Susan Andersen, Monterey Firehouse pavilion Saturday, June 19, from 1 to 4 p.m. See p. 7.

Friends of Monterey Library meeting, 10 a.m., Library.

Saturday, June 26:

Bidwell Museum Colonial History Series talk by Yale Professor John Demos, "The Experiential World of Early America: Rhythms and Regularities of Daily Life in the 1700s," Tyringham Union Church, Main Road, Tyringham, 10 a.m. See p. 19.

Bobby Sweet in concert, 8 p.m., Sandisfield Arts Center, 5 Hammertown Rd., Sandisfield. $15.

The Observer
April 26–May 25

High temp. (5/3)	87°
Low temp. (5/11)	26°
Avg. high temp.	65.0°
Avg. low temp.	41.2°
Avg. temp.	53.1°
Total precipitation (rain and melted snow)	3.81 in.
Snowfall	0.1 in.

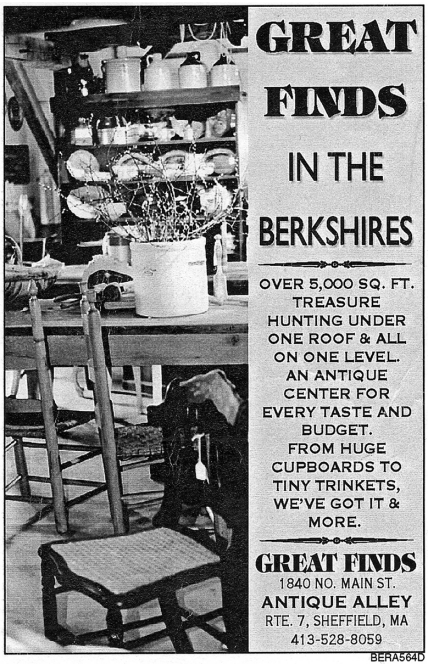
Precipitation occurred on 18 days.

Monday, June 28: Adult Book Discussion Group, 7 p.m., Monterey Library. All welcome.

Saturday, July 3:

Township No. 1 Day Community Celebration, full afternoon of activities, Bidwell House Museum, 100 Art School Road. Free. See p. 8.

Professor Read-a-lot, Magician, 10:30 a.m., Monterey Library. See p. 12.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Contributions from local and guest artists this month:
Pat Arnow, 19; Maureen Banner, 8, 15, 27; George Emmons, 20; Bonner McAllester, 18; Glynis Marsh, 23.

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